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a conclusion.\* As the result of the subjective collision we had the conclusion: that if man cannot know truth he can enjoy sensual pleasure. Taking this for the principle of our action, we entered the world of reality, and lo! it crumbles under

\* The only point to be remembered in this connection by you and me is this: that in all critical labors—this humble attempt not excepted—there may be observed to exist some slight analogy to the works of the taxidermist. Not merely because the operation in either case fills the external form of the given subject with such substance as he may have at hand, stubble, chaff, or bran, but especially because the object and purpose of their respective labors is nearly the same, namely, to assist the appreciation of the beautiful, in Art or Nature. And that as the one would not be permitted to present you with a specimen of a bird of Paradise with neck, wings, and tail

our feet. We clasp the beautiful, pure, and confiding girl, but as all rational end is ignored, our embrace is death. Not life, not perpetuity of the race, but *death*—blank nothingness; the conclusion reads: “If man cannot know truth, then he cannot exist?”

removed, simply, perhaps, because he found it inconvenient to fill them with his stubble, so you should refuse to accept as a fair specimen the result of the labors of the other if the subject treated bears traces of mutilation. But above all, as any serious attempt to make you believe that the headless and wingless specimen was complete as Nature produced it, would only excite your derision, still more should the dogmatic assertions of the critic, though ever so persistent, fail to mar your appreciation of a great work of art, but simply serve as “ear marks” by which you discern his own quality.

## GOETHE'S SOCIAL ROMANCES.

[Translated from the German of Carl Rosenkrantz, by TOM DAVIDSON.]

The character of Wilhelm Meister formed in Goethe's mind the reaction to Faust. Faust is the revolutionary spirit, breaking absolutely with the actual world, and withdrawing ever more and more into himself, in order to subject the world to himself from the rallying-point of his idea. From the beginning, he carries within him, in the infinitude of his spirit, the tragic certainty that no salvation can come to him from without; that he can find nothing outside of himself, capable of affording him any absolute satisfaction. With such persistence does he ever pass from conception to reality, that he will not even accept the ground and basis for his activity as already existing for him, but is resolved on creating them for himself. He will wrest the land from the sea, in order that it may be entirely the product of spirit, and upon this soil defiantly extorted from Nature by the power of will, he desires to stand with a free people.

Altogether different is Wilhelm Meister. His is a pliant nature, susceptible, and therefore also covetous of culture in all directions. Everything charms him, and everything satisfies him for the moment. He has no clear idea of himself at all, as

Faust has, and, therefore, does not act, but tries to assimilate every element with which he comes in contact. This infusion of new circumstances, new accomplishments, new insights, this self-culture is his action. Every new love, whose passion seizes him, seems to him the most real of all. Every new circle of men into which he enters, appears to him the society best adapted for him. Thus he passes from error to the detection of it, and thence, enriched by his new experience, to fresh error. By giving himself up, however, to everything external, he gains by appropriating it, more and more of harmony and power.

In Werther, at all events, there is a social Faust of the romance style, on the shoulders of the figure of Wilhelm. Werther, with his enthusiastic love of Nature, and of purity and strength of feeling, was crushed to death by the contradiction in which his heart stood to a cold, culture-fevered, unnatural society, and the contradiction between his passion and the sacredness of the law. He had not reached the elasticity and pliability of Wilhelm; neither had he the Titanic force of Faust, which, in its lyric fire, consciously saw worlds after worlds sink into ashes, and

yet maintained itself. His act was but the passive one of destruction.

We have designated the three romances—*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, *The Elective Affinities*, and *Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman'ship*—as social romances, and we must justify ourselves in the use of this term. We designate them so on account of their tendency. The ordinary novel-reader occupies himself with the historical matter. The contrasts of the characters, the interweaving of the adventures, monopolize his attention. This is the way in which the thousands read who form the public of the circulating libraries, and it is very characteristic that we Germans have invented the extraordinary pleonasm, which we find in no other language whatever, of calling the romance plainly a reading-book (*Lesebuch*). When any one asks us to lend him something to read, he means of course only a reading book, that is, a romance. A higher class of readers gets beyond the material occupation of the imagination with the external multiplicity of occurrences, and throws itself upon the consideration of the form. They admire in Goethe's romances the simplicity of the representations, the art displayed in the grouping, the clearness of the outlines, the perspicuity and pleasantness of the language, the creation of a new prose. But one step further must be taken. Readers must penetrate down to a conception of the subject, and try to grasp the idea, which, working from within, governs the characters and fortunes in these romances. This idea we call social. This foreign word, which has become naturalized among us, comprehends the meaning of two German words, *Geselligkeit* (sociality) and *Gesellschaftlichkeit* (sociability). The social is the tendency of man to hold communion with his fellows; the sociable is the mode and method of the social connection. At the present day, a great deal of mischief is done by the use of the word *social*. A large number of half-educated writers and unfledged talkers think they have said something full of import and intelligence, when they succeed in introducing this word social. It is just now the fashionable term in newspaper-offices and drawing-rooms.

On closer inspection, the social element is nothing more than what used formerly to be called civil society, having the family for its subordinate condition, and the state proper for its superior one, and making its main element consist in the production of divers forms of economy, of class differences, of scholastic and educational institutions, and of police. The police has no doubt fallen into great disrepute among our journalists, because as censorship it often comes into conflict with the free activity of the spirit; notwithstanding, if we look at its intrinsic value, the police, as the systematizing of all those institutions which have in view the well-being of society, is by no means so despicable. Its disagreeable traits appear only, when it comes as an obstacle in the way to prevent civil society from passing over into the higher form of a rational state, which acknowledges freedom itself as its essential condition. Goethe's social world takes no account whatever of church or state; it forswears the lawyers even, and retains only the police, with which it cannot dispense. He shows the same consistency that we find in our social theories of that day, which also develop, on the one hand, a system of wants and of economy, on the other, a system of police regulations, but no system of laws as its medium. In 1838, when in an essay upon Ludwig Tieck and the Romantic School, I expressed myself for the first time with considerable freedom upon the importance of the *Journeyman'ship* for the question of socialism, this was explained by Laube in the third volume of his German Literature as philosophical white-washing and extravagant admiration of the poet. Laube considered the *Journeyman'ship* an icy product of senile weakness, lacking that pathological interest and that passion which are essential to the very constitution of a romance. Goethe, he thought, had simply packed together in it a number of short stories, pretty sentences, and wise remarks. I do not think that at present any one pronounces such perversions of judgment upon it; and when one has before him such *aperçus* as that of Karl Grün, when one hears that George Sand and Bettina are preparing to write precisely on the social

element of this romance, he surely cannot doubt that the appreciation of the ideal content holds its way uninterruptedly in spite of all æsthetic prejudices.

The practical problem of Goethe's romances we can state in general terms only thus far, that they attempt to exhibit the Emancipation of Individuality. This they do in three different ways. First, with relation to the natural capabilities in which our Vocation has its source; second, with relation to love, which results in Marriage; third, with relation to Property, upon which depend our position in the world, our means of culture, our objective interaction with others, our substantial means of ingrooving with the general machinery of the world.

This educational problem is one which could not possibly have been proposed except through the principle which governs the modern world—the principle of free subjectivity which began in the German Reformation to metamorphose the church, and in the French Revolution to metamorphose the state. The French have the reformation of their religious consciousness still in the future; that of ours is, in all essential points, behind us. In the external outlines of political formalism the French are farther advanced. But since the religious element is the deeper and more comprehensive, the course of history with us must be very different from what it is in France. Nothing, in fact, is farther from the truth than the notion that we Germans, in order to be able to progress politically, must necessarily repeat all the phases of the French Revolution from 1789 downwards. Many of us have become so engrossed with the writings of Thiers and Mignet, that we are unable to get beyond those conceptions which in them have become rooted. It will become apparent, however, that we Germans will finally produce not merely a new edition of the French forms, but also another form of constitution from other materials. The principle of subjective freedom is to be taken not merely in its formal infinitude, as so many do at present; rather is it necessary that in order to verify itself, it should realize itself objectively. It was this concrete realization to which Goethe

particularly directed his attention, and which formed in him what may be called his political stand-point. Ordinary military and diplomatic politics were an object of indifference, perhaps of hatred to him, whereas he cultivated social politics with enthusiasm. He conceived the distinction of classes, in the sense understood by our century, as meaning the distinction of the different functions which arise from the division of labor, and as no longer implying exclusive privileges of caste.

The principle of free subjectivity has completely transformed family life with us. Internally, family life has received a higher internality. The dependence of the children upon their parents, of the wife upon the husband, as her lord, has remained only in form; it has vanished in reality. The confidential *Thou* of all the members of the family has become generally prevalent. Externally, however, the family has surrendered its exclusiveness. It is drawn into the development of art, of the church, of the state, and has been obliged to yield more and more to sympathy with public sociality, a circumstance which, to family life, has momentarily been fraught with even much detriment, the clamorous confusion whereof we must look upon merely as a phase of transition. The free choice of calling and culture has done away with the oppressiveness of guilds. The competition of individuals, however, has given rise to another evil, the dependence of workmen who have no means upon the great capitalists as contractors. The subjective principle aims, with good reason, at having all merely mechanical work performed by machinery. Machines are continually allowing more and more spirit to become free. Even women can now, by their aid, secure themselves a position of material independence, a thing which formerly was impossible. Machines, in the modern world, are what slaves were in the ancient. It is only relatively and momentarily that they can become a curse; intrinsically they are a blessing. Agriculture can never make a man one-sided in the same manner in which the manufacturing system is capable of blunting to callousness the individual workman; in like manner, it can never deprive the masses of

their entire means of subsistence so suddenly as the competition of manufacturers renders such vicissitudes possible. These experiences impel us to what, using an expression which has become technical, we call Organization of Labor. This will justify the reasonableness of machines, and continually allow more and more spirit to live to spirit. It is precisely by the universal application of machinery that it will annihilate the *proletariat*, notwithstanding that at present it often arises from the invention and introduction of new machines. Goethe has given attention to all these relations, and I am persuaded, now that we have become acquainted with the distress in Berlin, and among the Silesian weavers, that his picture of Susanna's weaving-establishment in the mountains will no longer be looked upon as altogether that monstrosity transgressing the limits of all poetry, which it was formerly held to be.

Modern life, moreover, has become a wandering life, and this circumstance has resulted in giving much greater determinateness to our view of the world, and in bringing about a more peaceful attitude of nations toward each other. The distant and dim produces, by its very indeterminateness, prejudices. Formerly, travelling was the privilege of individuals. Since the introduction of railways and steamships, this privilege of landed nobility, wealthy merchants and artists, well-to-do students, and of artisans who make their work a golden path, has vanished. Everybody travels now. Whole families become families of tourists. Contemplation gluts itself with pure realities, and the fabulous imagination of distance vanishes more and more in presence of definite distinctness.

The frequently childish wonder with which former generations drew their conceptions of many things from hearsay, from books and from pictures, is dying out. In particular, however, nations must find it daily more inconceivable why they should go to war with each other, inasmuch as by mere personal contact every people will come to form a juster judgment of the peculiar condition of its neighbors, and be able to find more points of contact for a peaceful

settlement of difficulties that may occur. No doubt, the circumstances of the present time seem to be at variance with this view, for it still looks as if our whole peace were only a provisional interval for the preparation of war. Characteristically enough, too, we call our peace an armed peace, and at this moment we are still building fortresses in the East against Russia, and in the West against France. Yet, it may be possible that these master-pieces of architecture, like the monasteries which Bavaria restored, shall remain only as monuments of the views entertained by an earlier, and, in this respect, still barbarous period, as the ruins of the knightly castles upon our mountains, or as the pyramids of the Egyptian Pharaohs. So powerful is the tendency of our time towards uniting all nations in a common bond of true humanity, that we are bold enough to stop the conflict of continents even. In ten years, the Isthmus of Suez will have ceased to be. Then, ships from Europe to the East Indies will no longer have to sail round the Cape of Good Hope, but will take the route by the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. The Isthmus of Panama too, will fall. North and South America will become islands altogether. Ships will sail direct from Europe to China, and from China to Europe.

But the most difficult question of all is that of property. In the *Apprenticeship* and in the *Journeymanship*, Goethe repeatedly lays stress on the fact, that all Europe is already taken possession of. He has, as we were formerly convinced, in his revolutionary pieces, always directed his chief attention to this problem, and the *Story of the Necklace*, in which he saw the first symptom of the most violent turning upside down of all relations, excited him to such a degree, that his friends almost thought he was out of his mind. The Germanic Conquerors divided among them the lands which they had won sword in hand. Landed property was the condition of all power. Gradually, however, in opposition to it, floating property has been rising in estimation, and now fights for recognition with it, in the form of money, as the universal means of obtaining prop-

erty. Among us Prussians, the qualification for taking any share in the political concerns of our country still depends essentially upon landed property. In France money has already become a condition. There, in order to confer the right of electing or of being elected, a certain fixed income is necessary. The person who has no property is excluded from all direct share in political activity. Inasmuch, however, as he may still take a conscious interest in it, and may possess patriotism, intellect, culture, insight, it is very natural that in France the mind should already be rising above money, and seeking to advance a claim to active politics under the title of capacity. In his social romances, Goethe has given the most varied directions to the movements of property, according validity to property simply as a means toward the development of individuality, but bestowing upon it, in this significance, emphatic prominence. And by this circumstance, among others, it can be shown, that when he sketched the *Apprenticeship*, he already had the composition of the *Journeyman-ship* in his mind. That secret society of shrewd men in the *Apprenticeship* comes upon the idea of buying up estates, and laying out capital in different countries, so that, in view of the uncertainty of all possessions, it may still secure an honorable and sufficient livelihood to its members. (*Lehrjahre*, Bk. viii. c. 7, beg.) This idea of a society distributed over all parts of the world, and securing the means of subsistence to all its members, was afterwards set forth by Sealsfield in his *Morton* to the commercial world. Goethe endeavored to paint an industrial association, and hence his anxiety to introduce the artisans, and to impart to them, by means of vocal music, a higher social culture. When Goethe drew his workmen's association, he had not before him any of those experiences which we have since arrived at, and which show that vocal music exercises a powerful ethical influence in workmen's associations. The inspiring themes of song raise the soul to nobler feelings, and the unison of song expands the bosom, and makes the heart of each individual feel at one with the hearts of others. Pity

it is that diseased political tendencies have so often abused the charm of song, or rather that the police, under the influence of pitiable prejudice, have spied danger in the loftier subjects of song. Under the Bourbons, not long before the revolution of July, the workmen were forbidden to sing at their meetings songs which they had composed themselves, full of moral impulse. The police was better pleased to see them occupying themselves with drinking at the bar-rooms outside the barriers, and singing equivocal and obscene songs.

But let us return to literature. Goethe began *Wilhelm Meister* in 1778, and had finished the sixth book in 1785, that is, before his visit to Italy. In conjunction with Schiller, he finished the romance, and subjected the whole to a careful revision, as is shown by the correspondence of the two poets. In 1794 the printing began. He intended, at first, to work out the *Journeyman-ship* in 1807; but the *Elective Affinities* pushed itself between. He did not continue it till 1810, and in 1821 he completed it. He brought it out a second time, corrected and enlarged, in 1829.

WILHELM MEISTER'S APPRENTICESHIP. THE ELECTIVE AFFINITIES, AND MEISTER'S JOURNEYMANSHIP IN THEIR GENERAL CONNECTION.

It is usual to consider the *Elective Affinities* as a romance having no further connection with *Meister's Apprenticeship* and *Journeyman-ship* than that it is the work of the same author. It is one of the merits of Hothe, that he first, in 1829, indicated a deeper connection between these compositions, in the December number of the *Berlin Annals of Scientific Criticism*. In bringing about a higher appreciation of the *Journeyman-ship* itself, Varnhagen has been particularly instrumental, — first, in 1833, by his collection of Critiques for History and Literature, and in 1843, in the third volume of his miscellaneous writings, by an essay entitled: *In the Spirit of the Journeymen*. [A delightfully detailed investigation of the *Journeyman-ship* has, since that time, been undertaken by Dr. A. Jung, in a separate work, Mayence, 1854.]

Let us, in the first place, sum up the rich life of these romances in the abstract formula, that *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* is intended to depict Formation of Individuality, the *Elective Affinities*, the Development of Individuality into Fate, and the *Journeyman'ship*, the Victory over Fate by resignation and activity.

Wilhelm Meister is originally a merchant, thinks himself intended for an actor, for an artist, and at last finds his special calling in the surgical art. He wavers about for a long time, and spends his life in making continual up-clearings with regard to himself. And this not only in his judgment concerning his natural powers, and his vocation as determined by them, but even in love. From the warm-hearted Mariana he passes to the coquettish Philina, to the pretty countess, to the hospitable Theresa, before he finds his ideal in Natalia. The idea of this romance is that we should educate ourselves, in accordance with the all sidedness of human nature generally, to the beautiful, and, in accordance with the one-sidedness of our individuality, also to the useful. In the former relation, it is through humanity generally; in the latter, it is through a particular accomplishment, that we can become helpful to others. Naturally every one is destined by his particular capabilities for a particular activity, but in this he is liable to manifold mistakes. The opinion of others, a ready adaptability, the presence of an example alluring us to imitation, material advantages offering themselves to us, all these are motives which may deceive us in regard to our vocation. The happiness or unhappiness of our life depends upon this. If we deceive ourselves concerning our natural capacity, or do not cultivate ourselves sufficiently, we may experience the torment of living a life which is a failure. What we are really capable of, however, we learn only through our activity. Culture, not merely in the sense of social polish, affability of manner, possession of the small arts of conversation, non-confusion of *I* and *me*,—but in the sense of the conception of our history, consists mainly in this, that we become conscious what capacities we have received

from nature, and how far we have proceeded in our cultivation of them; what stages of knowledge and of volition we have behind us, and what before us. Wilhelm, as a man, continually becoming, but still imperfect, stands opposed to a group of men who have come to a clear understanding with themselves, and who, with shrewd vital pleasure, endeavor to guide not only their own fates, but also those of other people, in so far as they consider those deserving of their society. The educational lodge, the society composed of Jarno, the Abbé, Lothario, and others, which has its archives in the mysterious tower, is no longer according to our taste. Our love for publicity, which is ever more and more becoming a habit with us, makes us dislike such petty cautions. They seem to us to savor of the craft of old age. Last century, however, up to the time of the revolution, things were otherwise. Let us remember what we were obliged to say of the Rosicrucians and Illuminists in order to arrive at an understanding of the poem *The Mysteries*. Tieck, also, in his *Lovell*, has a similar secret society; and George Sand, in her *Consuelo*, cannot avoid having one. The Venetian *Cantatrice*, also, goes through an apprenticeship, and must pay her tribute to the social machinery of the eighteenth century, by being incorporated into a secret society of mystics.

We ought now to pass from the *Apprenticeship* to the *Journeyman'ship*. Such seems the natural way. In the mind of the author, however, there was developed, as an antithesis, the *Elective Affinities*, which, at the same time, formed a further development. As far as style is concerned, we of course admit the similarity of the three romances, with which we are at present occupied. As regards subject, the *Elective Affinities*, keeping out of view its extent, might unquestionably form one of the novels in the *Journeyman'ship*, which deal with cases of moral collision, demanding abnegation or travel. That the persons who appear in it are quite different from those whose acquaintance we have made in *Meister*, would, in the epic width and extent of the *Journeyman'ship*, form no obstacle to prevent us from incor-

porating it in the picture of the whole. However, we must proceed to a still deeper comprehension. In the *Apprenticeship*, there is, to be sure, a great deal of talk about fate; yet it appears little. It is only in the last third of the romance, when the solemnity of death begins to prevail, only with the ruin of Mariana, the attempted suicide of Aurelia, the death of Mignon, and the account of her ominous birth, that we trace something of the necessary character of that higher working, which often seems to us so strange, in the union of the many seemingly distinct and individual occurrences, which we call Fate. The strength of the *Elective Affinities* lies precisely in this: We meet perfectly finished men, who have completed their education, and hence turn their activity outwards, to the laying out of parks, the schooling of the youth of the villages, and the like. So very complete are they, that Edward and Charlotte have already been once married. He has buried a wife, she a husband. Life seems to prosper them in richest abundance, for they have possessions which afford them competent means of living. The conditions of existence here are therefore on the whole those whose attainment has been aimed at in the *Apprenticeship*, in which we find not only Wilhelm, but others also, engaged in the process of searching and striving, in which no one has arrived at marriage, not even the mature, much-experienced Lothario, in which, finally, property seems still insecure, and the commercial house of Werner enters into negotiations with the secret society about a complex system of estates. But in the world of Edward and Charlotte, which seems so firmly established, so saturated with peace, in which everything looks so smooth outwardly, fate displays its iron power, and we learn from the tragic struggles of these amiable persons how little outward rest and regularity of existence suffice to preserve us from tumbling headlong into the destroying abysses of passion. It is a situation similar to that depicted in the *Tasso* as occurring in the pleasure-gardens and marble halls of Belriguardo, whose delightful retirement and beauty are not able to check the stream of

emotions which rolls suddenly with devastating flood over the noblest men. The first marriage of Edward, as well as that of Charlotte, was a mistake; it was a marriage of convenience. But their own marriage is likewise a mistake. In their youth they had been friendly with each other, had been accustomed to regard themselves as belonging to each other, and have, now that all obstacles to their union have been removed, at last reached the accomplishment of their wishes. But inwardly they are afflicted with *ennui*. In order to have more life about them, they send for Otilie from her boarding-school. And lo! with this harmless child, fate enters their circle. In one's vocation, individuality reaches its natural purpose. In marriage, individuality again lies at the basis, but in this case it stands in relation to another individuality, which supplements it. The man who misses his vocation has his unhappiness confined to himself. The man who makes a mistake in marriage is doubly unfortunate. In regard to the capacity that one has for anything, since one must cultivate it, and since in his performances he has an objective test, there is, after all, less room for deception, than there is with regard to the tie which, from among so many individuals worthy of our love, binds us forever irrevocably with this particular one. Through our freedom, we stand, in both relations, in opposition to the necessity of Nature, with the possibility of choice. We may adopt this or that profession, we may enter into this or that marriage. But if the direct determination of Nature does not harmonize with our wills, we remain in the former case novices and bunglers; in the latter, we become miserable men, strangling ourselves throughout the whole of a life with an insoluble contradiction. Edward is unquestionably destined for Otilie, Charlotte for the Captain. They belong to each other as natures having an elective affinity, *without any reflection*, without any regard to external relations. They are intrinsically one, and their life would be only the uniformly accelerated progress of a union in itself infinite. Now one might say that Edward and Otilie, Char-



lotte and the Captain might marry each other, and Edward give up his union with Charlotte. But it is exactly here that the moral earnestness of these natures develops itself. They stake every thing—they stake their very lives upon maintaining in its integrity so holy a relation as marriage, the beginning and the summit of all culture. Hence the movement of the events in the *Elective Affinities* is continually describing concentric circles. In the *Apprenticeship* there is a spiral going round and round, *ad infinitum*; here, on the contrary, every thing comes back to the same point, however far it may have intended to depart from it when it started. Arbitrary freedom cannot alter that which is fixed by Nature as a fathomless power. Edward goes to the war, comes back laden with honors, thinks he has become master of himself, and finds himself subject to the same law. The continual returning to the same point, even to the same locality in the *Elective Affinities*, produces an awfully profound, and genuinely fatalistic impression. In Otilie's death, or rather in her dying, the almost mystic-seeming invincibility of the spirit of Nature makes itself manifest. One can hardly say of this delicate gentle creature, who unintentionally commits so much mischief, that she voluntarily puts an end to her life by starvation. She is unable any longer to take food. Body and soul divide asunder in Otilie, and Edward, who lives only in her, dies after her.

The important thing therefore is not only, as was shown in the *Apprenticeship*, a correct estimate of our own capacities, but also the correct choice of a wife, inasmuch as it also requires the sympathy of the genius of Nature, unless marriage is to be destitute of warmth and thorough intimacy. The individual man, however, and also the individual family, are interwoven with universal fate—with the development of the world. And herein they can again cancel those limits which arise for the individual. What the individual calls fate in a particular sense is not absolutely, but only relatively and momentarily a limit to his freedom. The infinity of freedom is able to transcend it. The *Journeysman*

shows us the positive and negative sides of social education teaching us to overcome fate. Positive, inasmuch as we can never attain it. In reference to the choice of a profession, this is effected mainly by a proper cultivation of individuality—by education. The province of education is based entirely upon the principle of individual freedom. On the other hand, to enable the individual to make a proper choice in marriage, the most favorable education is to be obtained through a pure and rich family life, because in this the fine sensitiveness of feeling, and the habit of confidence are most thoroughly developed, while inconsiderateness and unconcern in contracting a marriage are provided against from the very outset. A beautiful family life of this sort which thrills him who is native to it, from his earliest years, with the breath of freedom, with morality, and respect for fate, is presented to us on the Uncle's estates. What then is to happen if the sacred order of things is after all destroyed? For we men must always be prepared to find, that it is possible for us, either through the impliability of our nature, or through the arbitrariness of our freedom, to go astray into the immoderate. Nothing undermines us more, nothing with greater certainty prepares us for a sudden fall, than the so-called fleshly security—when we think that we have gained complete victory, and have become unassailable. It is from the very point, whence with our calculating understanding we least expect it, that the blow falls upon us. There are always unguarded spots in our hearts, and it is usually only for want of opportunity that we do not allow our weakness and perverse tendencies to pass into actions. When this does happen, we are naturally astounded that such things should have been possible for us, who thought we had long ago got beyond them. The *Elective Affinities* shows us this self-generation of fate. This idea is transferred to the *Journeysman*. Lothario, with all his maturity cannot yet shake himself free from errors of passion. So long as errors which occur in the path of culture, and so long as the moral conflicts of individuals are of a subordinate character, they endeavor to

provide against them in secret, and to cure them by the application of mild remedies. If, however, the development is of a more serious nature, it is only renunciation that can restore the unity of the mind with itself and its harmony with others. If the painful injury takes a still deeper hold, and the freely imposed limitations of resignation are not sufficient, then the transgressor must travel. Or, if the word *transgressor* does not seem quite applicable, let us say, *the victim of fate*. He must alienate himself for a time from the circle in which his presence produces a polarizing tension. He must endeavor to rise above himself, to get outside of himself, by the reception of new objects into his consciousness and by coming in contact with other persons. We arrive at self-knowledge of a genuine kind not by brooding in seclusion over ourselves, but by mutual communication with the world. It is only the totality of human beings that is humanity, as Wilhelm comes to learn. Moreover, we do not attain self-oblivion by mere subjective abstraction, but only by an objective change in our conscious-

ness—by filling it with other materials. The person who is travelling must not tarry more than three days in the same place, in order that he may not run the risk afresh of getting engrossed in a one-sided manner and entangled.

If now, however, the individual has made himself fit for any sphere of activity, and has maintained himself sociably and socially at peace with the world, what can the individual accomplish? However far our power may extend, whatever flow of activity we may develop; in view of the immeasurableness of the world and the necessity which works with immanent power in all relations, we are nevertheless, in our individuality, only vanishing moments. If we would produce greater effects, we must unite ourselves with others. Goethe makes individuality unite and form associations with homogeneous natures. In the chain of this brotherhood, the power of the individual, which, in isolation, would split itself up, is increased to the extent of the power of all. The necessity of free association is the social result of the *Journey-manship*.

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## COMPREHENSION.

By A. C. B.

Foot surer than his, crossing o'er  
The rapid river shore to shore,  
While down the stream the ice-floes roar,—

Hold, closer than the bird's that sings  
Unmindful how the storm-wind swings  
The slender twig to which he clings,—

Touch, finer far than that so fine  
Upon the spider's silvery line  
He crosses sure through sun and shine.

O surer, closer, finer yet,  
Must be the thought that strives to get  
And hold the Truth inviolate.

For narrow as the bridge did rise  
Before the prophet's wondering eyes,  
Runs still the path to Paradise.

On either side we seize despair;  
We prison fast the sun-lit air,  
And lo! 'tis darkness that is there!

And so we miss, and grasp, and lose,  
While Thought its shadow still pursues,  
Nor knows its work is not to choose;

For only where the one is twain,  
And where the two are one again,  
Will Truth no more be sought in vain.